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Savannah River Site Marks Recovery Act Cleanup Milestone
M Area cleanup work was finished nearly two years ahead of schedule

AIKEN, S.C. (October 20) - Department of Energy, contractor and regulatory representatives gathered today to celebrate the completion of cleanup work at Savannah River Site's M Area, nearly two years ahead of schedule. This area cleanup was the first at SRS to be completed with the help of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding. Work was part of a \$1.6 billion investment of Recovery Act funds at SRS to accelerate cleanup and reduce the site's footprint by 75 percent by 2011.

"M Area cleanup marks a significant step toward meeting our environmental commitments at SRS, and toward reducing the operating footprint associated with the site's past mission," said Dr. Ines Triay, DOE's Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management. "At the same time, we were able to create or retain more than 3,600 jobs at SRS and train those workers, which are exactly the type of return we anticipated from our investment in the Recovery Act program."

M Area is the second largest SRS industrial area closed under an "area completion" strategy endorsed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region IV and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Under this strategy, facility demolition and environmental remediation are conducted as an integrated cleanup effort, saving substantial man-hours and paperwork for SRS and its regulatory agencies.

The cleanup effort, which took place over eight years, included the demolition of 23 buildings, as well as the remediation of a network of underground industrial piping and sewer lines, soil areas, and groundwater plumes that were contaminated from past spills and operations. The final steps, which included the treatment of

contaminated soils using passive soil vapor extraction technology, were completed in August.

“This is a significant accomplishment, both in cleanup and in teamwork,” said Garry Flowers, President and CEO of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, the management and operating contractor for SRS. “From beginning to end, this has been a good example of the working relationship between the people at SRS and the regulators at both the state and federal level. It’s also good to know that this Recovery Act program work was done with no safety incidents. That alone is reason to celebrate, and it’s a real credit to the people of the project team.”

Although the entire site will remain under federal ownership, completion of the M Area means 40 square mile area near the northwest boundary of SRS could be available for possible industrial reuse. DOE’s Savannah River National Laboratory will also use a portion of M Area for a port security project for the Department of Homeland Security.

M Area, which operated from 1952 to 1988, was originally home to manufacturing buildings that were used primarily for testing and fabrication of reactor fuel and targets.

Additional information on the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>. For more information about the SRS Recovery Act Project, visit www.srs.gov/recovery.

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